Tariq al-Muwahhidin

طريق الموحدين

(The Path of Monotheists)

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Portrait of Syed Shāh Rājū Ḥusaynī by an unknown artist from Golconda in the year 1686
(portrait presently Available in the Netherlands)

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْم

In the name of Allāh, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

In response to requests from some beloved individuals, these concise points have been composed regarding the awareness of essence and attributes and the importance of turning towards Him according to one's capacity and ability. This guidance has been named ‘The Path of Monotheists,’ reflecting the grace and favour of Allāh, true to its title.

(May Allāh make you happy in both worlds)

Despite believing in the holy Quran,
people become afflicted,
with bad beliefs and superstitions, /speculations.”
And being unaware of the origin of this issue, some of them are the people,
of tasbih (anthropomorphism),
Anthropomorphism attributes human characteristics, emotions, intentions, or Behaviour to non-human entities.
This can include animals, inanimate objects, natural phenomena, or even deities, the word
Anthropos (Humans)
and Morphe (form),
Those who attribute befitting qualities to Allāh almighty and consider them are some who are the *Ahl-i tasbīḥ* اهل تسبيح (those who draw analogical, attributing, Allāh Almighty), and considering him similar to other creators,
Some are the *Ahl-i jabr* اهل جبر
(Fatalists) A fatalist is an individual who believes that all events,

including their actions and decisions, are predetermined or ‘fated”
to happen, and therefore, they are powerless to change the outcome,
Consider humans to be compelled in their choices, actions and attributes, even the worship of Allāh almighty to Allāh almighty
The *ahl-i qadar* اهل قدر (those who ascribe power to themselves).
Attribute Allāh’s divinity to themselves and consider themselves creatures of their actions.
In short, these people have as many opinions as they have mouths.
This seems like the story of the blind man and the elephant, where they formed opinions about it, according to their imagination and conjecture.

If Someone’s hand touched it, they said it was like a shield.
If someone’s trunk touched it, they said it was like a tree trunk.
If someone found a foot, they said it was like a pillar. If someone felt the back, they said it was like a throne.
When the tale of an unseen image of the beloved spread,
Among tongues, the description went beyond all bounds.
However, by the grace of Allāh, a group of researchers اهل تحقيق (*ahl-i taḥqīq*) enjoys the blessings of unveiling and (manifestation,) and the (effulgence,) of the essence, and attributes of Allāh, these people progress from the knowledge of certainty,
(*‘Ilm al yaqīn*) علم يقين to the eye of certainty, عين اليقين (*‘Ayn al yaqīn*) and then, to the Truth of certainty حق يقين (*Ḥaq al-yaqīn*).
From the *sharī‘at* شريعت (Islamic law)
to the *ṭarīqat* طريقت or (طريقه) (Ṣūfī path), from the *ḥaqīqat* حقيقت (truth) or (reality), to the *ma‘rifat* معرفت
(gnosis), or (*‘irfān*), عرفان and from the *ma‘rifat* to *waḥdat* وحدت (Unity)

Meanings:

1. Effulgence: Effulgence refers to. It can also describe something exceptionally beautiful or radiant in appearance or spirit.

2. *Ḥaq al-yaqīn*: or حق يقين 'Reality of Certainty.' It represents the highest level of certainty in Islamic belief, achieved through experience and direct knowledge of Allāh. It signifies complete conviction and understanding of the truth, often described as 'seeing Allāh with the eye of the heart.'

3."Eye of certainty" (عين اليقين), also translated as 'vision of certainty', refers to. It signifies a state where knowledge is not merely accepted but is directly witnessed or experienced, making it a higher form of certainty than one based on belief or information.

4. Knowledge of certainty: علم يقين. Knowledge and certainty are often discussed in philosophy, with some arguing that knowledge requires certainty, while others disagree. In the context of knowledge, certainty refers to the people of *waḥdat* وحدت, who are two groups: one group says that he is not more than one, and that he is the existence of Allāh.

There is no existence other than the existence of Allāh, or is it possible, if there were an existence other than Allāh, people would not recognise Allāh(Allāh)? just as they distinguish day from night, and night from day,

لا يعرف الله غير الله لا اله الا هو

None knows Allāh except Allāh,''

There is no Allāh but He, Allāh.

Another group says that there are two types of existence:

1)Real existence وجود حقيقي (*wujūd-i ḥaqīqī*)

2)Imaginary existence وجود خيالي (*wujūd-i khayālī*)

Real existence belongs to Allāh, and imaginary existence belongs to the world and its inhabitants.

Meanings:

1. *Wujūd-i ḥaqīqī* وجود حقيقي (Real Existence): *Wujūd* designates the Essence of Allāh or of the Real (*zāt al-ḥaq*), (ذات الحق) the only reality that is real in every respect. On lower levels, *wujūd* is the underlying substance of 'everything other than Allāh' (*mā siwā allāh*)—which is how Ibn Arabi and others define the 'cosmos' or 'universe' (العالم). *Wujūd*, meaning 'existence' or 'presence', refers to Allāh. On the other hand, *waḥdat al-shuhūd*, meaning 'Apparentism' or 'Monotheism of Witness', holds that Allāh and his creation are entirely separate.

2.*Wujūd-i khayālī* وجود خيالي (imaginary existence). Imagination is a faculty of the human mind that can be used to interpret reality and connect with the spiritual realm. While imagination can be a powerful tool, Islam emphasises that it should not be confused with reality. The concept of '*shirk*' (associating partners with Allāh) often involves attributing reality to things that are not real or imagining things that are not based in fact, which is discouraged. The Quran and the Prophet Muḥamamd's teachings acknowledge the power of imagination. For example, dreams are considered a source of divine revelation or inspiration, and the ability to imagine and visualise is seen as a way to connect with the unseen world, including angels, ملايكة and جنات *Jins*.

The one, the Exalted, is the being of Allāh who is everlasting,
and eternal,''
Everyone upon it will perish,
And there will remain the face of your lord, owner of majesty and Honour, Quran Chapter 55, verses 26 and 27. Specifically, verse 26 states, 'Everyone upon the earth will perish,' while verse 27 declares, 'And there will remain the Face of your Lord, Owner of Majesty and Honour.'

كُلُّ مَنْ عَلَيْهَا فَانٍ وَيَبْقَىٰ وَجْهُ رَبِّكَ ذُو الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ

Whoever is on the earth will perish. And the essence of your Lord, Who is the Master of glory and splendour and the Master of bounty and honour, will remain.[1]

His essence and attributes remain unchanged by the creation of the universe Allāh almighty in his essence, and attributes in uniquely one,
possessing perfectly befitting,
attributes and free from any unsuitable qualities,
his essence and attributes are ancient just as everything on the face of the earth is Transient. (Lasting only for a short time; impermanent.)
And only the Essence of your lord,
The possessor of majesty and generosity will remain,
And there will remain the face of your lord, the owner
of majesty and honour

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Ḥayyu حي, قيوم and Qayyūm (The Ever-Living, The Self-Subsisting), عالم ʻĀlim (The All-Knowing), Murīd مريد (The Willing), and Qādir قادر (The All-Powerful) – the meanings of these names are eternally established with the Ancient Being (Allāh). Allāh, according to those with insight, these too are ancient. These attributes are affirmative صفات ثبوتی (*Ṣifāt-i thubūtī*).

Muʻiz معز (The Bestower of Honour), *Muzillu* مزل (The Abaser), *Muḥī* محی (The Giver of Life), *Mumītu* ممیت (The Giver of Death), and similar attributes arise from relationship and addition, which is why they are called relational attributes صفات اضافی (*Ṣifāt-i izāfī*).

[1] The Quran Chapter no. 55, Verse nos. 26-27.

Salām سلام (The Flawless), *Quddūs* قدوس (The Holy), *Ghanī* غنی (The Self-Sufficient) – these are attributes that negate defects, imperfections, and need, and are therefore called negative attributes (*Ṣifāt-i salabī*).
The collection of names within these three categories is limited, but Allāh is the comprehensive name of that Ancient Being qualified by all names.

The being of (The True Allāh) حق تعالٰی is independent of every beginning and end, likeness and partner, above and below, right and left, front and back, inside and outside, connected and disconnected. He is not 'a thing,' but everything exists and endures through Him. He is indivisible and immeasurable. He is not confined by time, space, or direction. He is not a limited light, but an endless and boundless ocean. Compared to the grandeur of the two realms, the entire universe is but a drop, or even less. No particle among all existing things is deprived of Allāh's grace or beyond His power and knowledge.
Some researchers have stated that there is no existence except for the existence of the Almighty (Allāh), which is why it is said, 'He is all.' This world is a world of dominion (*mulk*), which dominion does not own but originates from the Owner (*Mālik*) and is under His control.

تَبٰرَكَ الَّذِیْ بِیَدِهِ الْمُلْكُ وَهُوَ عَلٰی كُلِّ شَیْءٍ قَدِیْرُۙ

Blessed is He in Whose (Mighty) Hand is the kingdom (of all the worlds). And He enjoys perfect command over everything;[2]
As it has been said, there is obedience and disobedience, paradise and hell, reward and punishment in this dominion.

مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلِنَفْسِهٖ وَمَنْ اَسَآءَ فَعَلَیْهَا

Whoever does pious work does it for (the benefit) of his own self, and whoever commits sin, its (resultant evil suffering) will fall back on him alone. And your Lord is not at all unjust to His servants.[3]

[2] The Quran, 67:1.
[3] The Quran, 41:46.

Thus, He is the *Kul al-kul* (Totality of All). This dominion has an outer and inner aspect: the *malakūt* (the spiritual realm/dominion).

That too is under His control, as He stated:

فَسُبْحَـٰنَ ٱلَّذِى بِيَدِهِۦ مَلَكُوتُ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ

So, Glory be to Him in Whose Hand (i.e., power and control) is the sovereignty over everything and to Him you will be returned.[4]

In the *malakūt*, a term often used in Ṣūfī thought, there is every act of obedience and worship. It is a realm beyond the physical dominion (Mulk) and the realm of power and might (Jabarūt). All return to Allāh in the *malakūt*, which is why He is called the 'Totality of All'. This means that the Jabarūt is the inner reality of the Mulk and the *malakūt* and is close to both.

The spiritual realm, also known as the spirit realm, divine realm, or ultimate reality, refers to. It's a concept explored in various religions and spiritual traditions. It is often depicted as a realm where the soul or consciousness interacts with divine entities or experiences a higher level of being.

The 'realm of power and might'.

That is the *'Arsh* عرش (Throne),

ثُمَّ ٱسْتَوَىٰ عَلَى ٱلْعَرْشِ

and then (matching His Glory) established His authority on the Throne (i.e., enforced in the universe the system of His sovereign command and control).[5]

In *jabarūt* (the realm of power and might), there is closeness and union:

وَهُوَ مَعَكُمْ أَيْنَ مَا كُنتُمْ

Wherever you are, He is with you.[6]

In this way, He is the Totality of All, meaning the *lāhūt* (the divine realm) which is beyond the *'Arsh*:

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[4] The Quran, 36:83.
[5] The Quran, 7:54.
[6] The Quran, 57:4.

وَّاللّٰهُ مِنۡ وَّرَآئِهِمۡ مُّحِيۡطٌ

And Allāh encompasses (them) from all sides.[7]

In *lāhūt*, there is effacement:

يَمۡحُواۡ ٱللَّهُ مَا يَشَآءُ وَيُثۡبِتُۖ وَعِندَهُۥٓ أُمُّ ٱلۡكِتَٰبِ

Allah erases whatever (writing) He wills and confirms (whatever He wills).[8]

Therefore, everything originates from Him and is under His control. There is nothing without Him. Only He remains; everything else is transient.

كُلُّ مَنْ عَلَيْهَا فَانٍ وَيَبْقَىٰ وَجْهُ رَبِّكَ ذُو الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ

Whoever is on the earth will perish. And the essence of your Lord, Who is the Master of glory and splendour and the Master of bounty and honour, will remain.[9]

This is a direct quote from the Quran, reinforcing that only Allāh's essence is eternal and unchanging.

'If, in this regard, we say (He is the All/Whole), would it be correct?' The phrase '*Huwa al-kul*' (هوالکل) signifies Allāh as the totality of existence, implying that all creation manifests or reflects His being. From a mystical perspective, this statement would be considered correct as it asserts Allāh's all-encompassing nature and ultimate reality.

1. Mystical Realms (صوفیانہ دائرے)

The passage then describes different realms of existence, often discussed in Ṣūfī cosmology, relating them to aspects of the human spiritual being:

2. *Mulk* (ملك): The lowest realm, representing the visible, material world, subject to change and decay.

[7] The Quran, 85:20.
[8] The Quran, 13:39.
[9] The Quran 55:26-27.

3. *Malakūt* (ملكوت): The world of sovereignty, the unseen world of spirits, angels, and subtle forms. It's the realm where meanings take form and bodies are reconnected to their meanings.

4. *Jabarūt* (جبروت): The realm of power, divine attributes, and archetypes. It is the very 'seed' or basis from which the *mulk* and *malakūt* realms unfold. It is considered eternal, while *mulk* and *malakūt* are created and limited.

5 *Lāhūt* (لاهوت): The highest realm, representing the purely divine essence, the absolute, unknowable Allāh head.

6. *Hāhūt* (هاهوت): Sometimes placed even higher than *lāhūt*, representing the absolute unknowable essence of Allāh before any manifestation or attributes. It is a concept that underscores the transcendence and incomprehensibility of Allāh's essence, serving as a reminder of the limitations of human understanding when it comes to the divine.

In essence, *jabarūt* represents a profound level of divine reality, embodying immense power, underlying archetypes, and the source of all cosmic laws, acting as a bridge between the ultimate divine essence and the more manifest spiritual and physical worlds.

(الانسان سر السر و الخفى)

The human is the secret of the hidden secret, and the hidden is Me. This profound saying (often attributed to Ṣūfī masters) emphasises the belief that the human being, particularly the perfected human (انسان كامل), carries within them a divine secret, a reflection of Allāh's hidden essence. It suggests a deep connection between the micro-cosmos (human) and the macro-cosmos (Allāh), implying that understanding oneself deeply can lead to a deeper understanding of the Divine, fostering a sense of spiritual connection and significance.

In essence, the passage explores the concept of *tawḥīd* توحيد (Oneness of Allāh) through a mystical lens, describing the various levels of divine manifestation and

the profound connection between the human spirit and the ultimate reality of Allāh.

‘That eternal grace (فیض قدیم) that remains in humanity is eternal. It does not change in its essence or attributes with the arising of existence. Allāh Almighty encompasses everything, and encompasses everything in knowledge as well. Allāh Almighty has said, ‘Indeed, Allāh has encompassed all things in knowledge.’ Therefore, know the Truth (Allāh) as the All-Knower. Purify your inner self (باطن) and do not allow anything other than Him to enter it. Know Him as the Ever-Living (*Ḥayy*) and

The Self-Subsisting (*Qayyūm*), and remain in the state of a perishable attribute (فانی صفت).

Deeper Meaning and Interpretation:

This passage speaks to a core Ṣūfī and mystical understanding of Allāh’s unchanging nature and presence within creation, particularly within the human being.

‘Ancient grace’ (فیض قدیم): This refers to the eternal emanation or bounty of Allāh’s existence and attributes that is inherently present in the human soul. It's not something acquired, but an intrinsic connection to the Divine.

‘Does not change in its essence or its attributes with the arising of existence’: This emphasises Allāh’s absolute transcendence and immutability. No matter what changes occur in the created world, Allāh’s reality remains constant.

‘Allāh Almighty has encompassed all things in knowledge’: This is a direct Quranic quote

ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِي خَلَقَ سَبۡعَ سَمَٰوَٰتٖ وَمِنَ ٱلۡأَرۡضِ مِثۡلَهُنَّۖ يَتَنَزَّلُ ٱلۡأَمۡرُ بَيۡنَهُنَّ لِتَعۡلَمُوٓاْ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيۡءٖ قَدِيرٞ وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ قَدۡ أَحَاطَ بِكُلِّ شَيۡءٍ عِلۡمَۢا

Allah (alone) has created seven heavens and (brought about seven strata layer upon layer also whilst creating) the earth like them. And the command (i.e., phenomenon of coordination in the system of nature) continues to operate

amongst them so that you may know that Allah has absolute power over everything, and that Allah has encompassed everything with His Knowledge (i.e., when scientific explorations will culminate, you will then perceive the glory of Allah's power and His All-Encompassing knowledge as to how He has described the realities of His creation centuries before).[10]

Reinforcing Allāh's omniscience and comprehensive awareness.

'Know the Truth (Allāh) as the All-Knower': This is a call to recognise Allāh's absolute knowledge and to align one's understanding with this ultimate reality, fostering a sense of enlightenment and wisdom.

'Purify your inner self and do not allow anything other than Him to enter it': This is a central theme in Ṣūfīsm—the purification of the heart (قلب) from worldly attachments and distractions, focusing solely on Allāh. It's about achieving spiritual sincerity and singularity of purpose, fostering a sense of spiritual upliftment and purification.

'Know Him as the Ever-Living (حی) and the Self-Subsisting (قیوم)': These are two of Allāh's Divine Names (الْأَسْمَآءُ الْحُسْنٰى). '*Ḥayy*' signifies Allāh's eternal life, and '*Qayyūm*' signifies His self-sufficiency and the fact that He sustains all existence.

'Remain in the state of a perishable attribute' is a profound mystical instruction. It means to remain in a state of annihilation (فَنَا) of one's ego and transient qualities, recognising one's ultimate dependence on Allāh and the impermanence of all created things. It's about humility and realising that only Allāh is eternal and self-sufficient.

The passage encourages deep introspection, purification of the heart, and the recognition of Allāh's eternal, unchanging presence both in the cosmos and, crucially, within the human being's most profound essence. It's a call to live a life of divine knowledge and devotion.

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[10] The Quran, 65:12.

Consider him a disciple. Refrain from your own will and desire. Acknowledge him as All-Powerful.

Be present in every situation. Consider him All-Hearing. Do not speak inappropriately. Consider him All-Supporting. Refrain from unsuitable actions in his presence.

Consider him All-Speaking. Always remain silent.

Strive to erase your blameworthy attributes from your heart because your life is in His hands, and you may remain with Him. Your knowledge is in His knowledge, that you may recognise Him. Your will is in His will, that you may desire Him.

In power, your power is that you attain Him. In hearing, your hearing is that you listen to Him.

In speech, your speech is that you speak with Him. In sight, your vision is that you see Him. These are the additional attributes at the station of the holy spirit, as stated:

نَفَخْتُ فِيهِ مِن رُّوحِى

and breathe My (divine) spirit into (the inner self of) this (human physical) organism[11]

It was said that prophets and special saints' miracles and wondrous deeds become apparent. These include the comprehension and realisation of inner meanings, spiritual unveilings (*mukāshifāt*), مکاشفات breaking of natural laws (*Khirq-i 'ādat*), خرق عادات bringing the dead to life.

(*Iḥyā* wo *amwāt*) احیاء و اموات and giving life to trusts (like bringing disciples back to life)

[11] The Quran, 15:29.

From the influence of this spiritual addition, in the station of faqir (spiritual poverty), negative attributes, such as the perfection of self-sufficiency, become ineffective.

When the faqir is complete, attaining the desired destination is possible. Allāh Almighty is very close to creation, and creation is very far from Allāh Almighty. Hearts are not aware of His closeness because of it. Allāh Almighty's proximity is equal to the entire world. His proximity and distance are based on knowledge and ignorance.

Otherwise, He is nearer to us.

'He said, 'We are closer to them than you, but you do not see.' We are closer to them, but they do not see us.

Awareness of this closeness is essential. One who is not aware of it is deprived and unfortunate. If one does not attain the closeness of the Divine light, access to the Divine Being is impossible until they remove their distance and draw near to closeness.

كُنْتُ كَنْزًا مَخْفِيًا، فَأَحْبَبْتُ أَنْ أُعْرَفَ فَخَلَقْتُ خَلْقًا،

I was a hidden treasure, and I loved to be known, so I created a creation.[12]

Because the Almighty Truth brought humanity from the solitude of (I was a hidden treasure),

كنت كنزا مخفيا

to the manifestation of

فخلقت الخلق

(So I created creation.

فاجبت ان اعرف

12

And from closeness, He cast them into distance, and from union, into separation, so that the value of love and gnosis (spiritual knowledge) might become apparent according to (I desired to be known).

فاجبت ان اعرف

And thus,

اَلْاِنْسَانُ سِرِّيْ وَاَنَا سِرَّهُ

(Man is My secret, and I am his secret)

might be proven true.

Humanity, whose nature is forgetfulness, has become engrossed in adornment, status, honour, desires, pleasures, leadership, and comfort. Occupied with eating and sleeping, they have become self-centered and narcissistic.

'Falling astray from the essence of connection and infallibility, one began to wander in the darkness of arrogance, pride, malice, and enmity, and became the subject of 'وَالْعَصْرِۙ اِنَّ الْاِنْسَانَ لَفِيْ خُسْرٍۙ' (By time, indeed humanity is in [utter] loss).[13] But those graced with faith, testimony, obedience, worship, compassion, mercy, chivalry, love, divine knowledge, and adherence to the blessed Prophet Muḥamamd (peace be upon him)...'

Translation of the Quranic Verse: 'اِلَّا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَ عَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ' means:

'Except for those who have believed and done righteous deeds.'[14]

This verse is from Sūrah *al-'Asr* (Chapter 103) of the Quran. The full Sūrah is:

وَالْعَصْرِۙ اِنَّ الْاِنْسَانَ لَفِيْ خُسْرٍۙ اِلَّا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَ عَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّۙ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ

By the passing time (whose rotation bears witness to the affairs of mankind). Or By the Prayer of declining day ('Asr, for this Prayer is the middle of all Prayers). Or By the declining time of the day, (when the sun, after shining

[13] The Quran, 103:1-2.
[14] The Quran, 103:3.

for the whole day, presents the sight of its setting). Or By the holy era of the Prophethood of Muhammad (blessings and peace be upon him), the sole objective and the most coveted achievement of all ages historic as well as pre-historic, and of all times to come. Indeed, man is at a loss (for he is losing his valuable lifetime), Except for those who believe and do good deeds and exhort one another to truth and exhort one another to patience (in the face of hardships and afflictions that are faced whilst preaching the Din [Religion] of truth).[15]

'He is counted among the guided category. He returned to his origin and attained the station of closeness. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

اجيعو ابطانكم واكمعو اكباركم واعروا اجساداكم ترون الله عيان عيان في داريدنيا

This can be translated as: Keep your stomachs hungry, keep your livers thirsty, and keep your bodies unclothed; you will see Allāh openly, openly, in this world. Therefore, one should first adopt a state of poverty and hunger. Withdraw from adornments and worldly attachments, cultivate a desire for perfection in the second stage, and become free from all ties.

In the third stage, embrace the love of Allāh and solitude.

In the fourth stage, attain the highest love and a state of seclusion. Burn yourself in the fire of divine love and become annihilated. Do not attribute movement and stillness to your being, but rather understand all movements and stillness as coming from Allāh, and witness the light of Allāh, so that you may say:

ما رات شيا الا رات الله فيه

I did not see anything except Allāh in it.

[15] The Quran, 103:1-3.

Attain the ranks. See the Truth (*Ḥaq*) as ever-present everywhere, because the light of Truth manifests everywhere.
There is nothing that is not from His light. All that exists is His light. His light is brighter than the sun.
He is not hidden from anyone. One who sees Him cannot see oneself. Until one abandons their perception, they cannot see Him. So, turn away from your perception and attain His perception, so that you may see Him through His perception.
Aḥmad Khadrawayh (may Allāh have mercy on him) states that the path is present and the Truth is manifest.

Withdraw from adornments and worldly attachments, cultivate a desire for perfection in the second stage, and become free from all ties.
In the third stage, embrace the love of Allāh and solitude.
In the fourth stage, attain the highest love and a state of seclusion. Burn yourself in the fire of divine love and become annihilated. Do not attribute movement and stillness to your being, but rather understand all movements and stillness as coming from Allāh, and witness the light of Allāh, so that you may say:
'I did not see anything except Allāh in it.'

Whoever looks at it with astonishment becomes blind. The divine path is servitude. Allāh is manifest; His manifestation is through light. His light is everywhere, as the Holy Quran states: 'Allāh is the Light of the heavens and the earth.' So, whoever is deprived of His vision despite His luminous manifestation is astonished and blind due to the darkness of self-centeredness and ego. If this darkness is removed, then undoubtedly...'

Guidance is from love, love is from generosity, and profound love (*'ishq*) عشق is from mercy.

ذٰلِكَ فَضْلُ اللّٰهِ يُؤْتِيْهِ مَنْ يَّشَآءُ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيْمِ

Allah's bounty which He grants whom He likes. And Allah is Most Bountiful.[16]

Whoever considers Allāh to be unique becomes estranged from everyone else. Whoever sees Allāh as unique and one becomes estranged even from themselves. And whoever, with Allāh, becomes selfless and loses their influence, the people of insight always become immersed in the light of the presence of the True *Allāh subḥānahu wa ta'ālā* (Glorified be He and Exalted), far from themselves and close to the essence of the Almighty Allāh.

بشر حافي Bishr al-Ḥāfī

(May Allāh have mercy on him) never used to wear shoes. When people asked him the reason, he said, 'The True Allāh (*Ḥaq ta'ālā*)...

They say, I have made the earth a bed for you. It is against proper conduct to walk on the beds of kings with shoes on.

Some people of Allāh اهل تصوف (saints) have even witnessed the light of Allāh in everything.

Bishr Ḥāfī

بشر حافي (RA) was also in this state. Allāh has given eyes to those who should not look at anyone except Allāh and should observe proper conduct everywhere.

Once, 'Uthmān jarī عثمان جري (RA) was passing by a street when someone from an upper floor dropped a basin of ashes on him. His companions became angry and wanted to say something…

Abū 'Uthmān ابو عثمان (RA) said, 'A thousand thanks that the one who deserved the punishment of fire was only turned into ashes.'

[16] The Quran, 62:4.

Ḥazrat Sayyidunā Bāyazīd بایزید (RA) was passing through a narrow path with his companions when a dog also appeared on the path. He moved aside and gave way to it.

One day, Ḥazrat Sayyidunā Khwājah ‘Alī Jurjānī (RA) placed food in front of him and said, ‘Oh Lord, send a guest.’ Suddenly, a dog arrived. Khwājah ‘Alī shooed it away, and it left. A voice from the unseen (Ḥāṭif) حاطف called out, ‘He wanted a guest. When I sent him, you turned him away!’

A spiritual state, حال (*ḥāl*), overcame him. He searched for it in palaces and here and there but couldn't find it. When he took the path to the desert, he saw it sleeping in a corner, along with the food.

He was with them, and he placed it in front. Sun paid attention, and Khwājah ‘Alī became ashamed and engaged in repentance and seeking forgiveness. He took off his turban and said,

‘I have repented.’ The dog said, ‘Very good, O Khwājah ‘Alī, when the guest wished for something and arrived, you drove him away. You need eyes.’

‘If you had a connection with Shāh Shujā‘ (RA), then whatever you saw, you would have seen it correctly, meaning he was a *murshid* مرشد (spiritual guide).’

Ḥazrat Sayyidunā Manṣūr al-ḥallāj (RA) had a blanket (*goadrī*) and did not separate from himself for twenty years. One day, with much insistence, it was separated, and many poisonous insects were born. A person sitting nearby saw a scorpion in that blanket.

‘He intended to kill (someone). Ḥazrat Sayyidunā Manṣūr al-ḥallāj (RA) said, ‘Leave him, for he has been my companion for twelve years.’ If your eye of insight were manifest, you would see openly that if you were granted eyes that could see, you would witness the constant outpouring of divine grace every moment and every instant. Every atom of the universe appears to me as a guide on the path to union with the Truth. This state cannot be attained until perpetual

witnessing becomes possible without the guidance of a spiritual master (*pīr wo murshid*) پیر و مرشد through the instruction of *zikr*, مراقبه (*murāqabah*) (meditation), and *mushāhadah* مشاہدہ (contemplation). There are five types of ذکر *zikr*:

Zikr-i zabānī ذکر زباني (verbal remembrance)

Zikr-i qalbī ذکر قلبي (remembrance of the heart)

Zikr-i rūḥ ذکر روح (remembrance of the spirit)

Zikr-i sirrī ذکر سری (secret remembrance)

Zikr-i khafī ذکر خفی (hidden remembrance)"

Zikr is a central spiritual practice in Islam, particularly in Ṣūfīsm, that involves the remembrance of Allāh. It encompasses various forms of devotion, from verbal recitations to deep internal contemplation.

The text you provided outlines five specific types of *zikr*, often associated with Ṣūfī paths:

Zikr-i zabānī ذکر زباني (Verbal Remembrance): This is the most common and basic form of Zikr, where one recites specific phrases, names of Allāh, or supplications aloud. It involves the movement of the tongue and lips. Examples include saying '*subḥānallāh*' سبحاناالله (Glory be to Allāh), '*alḥamdulillāh*' الحمدالله (All praise is due to Allāh), '*allāhu akbar*' الله اکبر (Allāh is the Greatest), '*lā ilāha illallāh*' لآالہ الا الله (There is no Allāh but Allāh), and sending blessings upon the Prophet Muḥamamd (*ṣalawāt*).محمد ر سول الله This type of *zikr* is beneficial even if the heart is not fully present, as it can help train the tongue and, over time, influence the heart.

Zikr-i qalbī ذكر قلبي (Remembrance of the Heart): This involves remembering Allāh silently within the heart, without any verbal articulation. The focus is on feeling the presence of Allāh and letting the heart be immersed in His remembrance. In some Ṣūfī orders, like the Naqshbandi, this is a significant practice, where one strives to feel their heart constantly saying 'Allāh, Allāh, Allāh,' whether awake or asleep, in any state.

Zikr-i rūḥ ذكر روح (remembrance of the spirit): This is a more advanced stage of *zikr* where the remembrance of Allāh moves beyond the physical and emotional heart to the spiritual realm. At this level, the *zākir* (one who performs *zikr*) begins to perceive the 'lights of the attributes of Allāh, indicating a deeper spiritual awakening and connection. It signifies a profound level of spiritual purification and the life of the spirit.

Zikr-i sirrī ذكر سرى (secret remembrance): '*sirr*' refers to the secret or innermost consciousness. *Zikr-i sirrī* is the remembrance in this innermost heart, where Divine Mysteries are revealed. It's a highly subtle and profound form of *zikr*, often associated with a deeper communion between the individual and Allāh, where Divine Light illuminates the individual's inner secrets.

Zikr-i khafī ذكر خفى (hidden remembrance): This is the most secret and subtle form of remembrance, also referred to as '*zikr akhfā al-khafī*' (the most secret of secret remembrance). It signifies a beautiful, mutual remembrance between Allāh and His slave, who has attained much knowledge and love. It is described as the vision of the Reality of Absolute Truth, a silent remembrance that is delicate and infinitely sweet.

In Ṣūfīsm, *zikr* ذکر is not merely a ritual but a fundamental spiritual practice aimed at purifying the heart, elevating the soul, and ultimately achieving closeness to Allāh. Ṣūfīs believe that through consistent *zikr*, one can:

Cleanse the heart: Remove negative traits like arrogance, envy, and malice.

Develop positive qualities: Cultivate patience, compassion, sincerity, and gratitude.

Strengthen faith and connection with Allāh: Deepen one's relationship with the Divine.

Attain inner peace and tranquility: Reduce stress and anxiety, improve emotional well-being.

Achieve spiritual enlightenment and higher states مقامات (*maqāmāt*): Progress on the spiritual path, moving towards 'fanā; فَنَا (annihilation of self) and 'baqā' بَقَا (permanence in Allāh).

Experience *mushāhadah* مشاہدہ (contemplation/witnessing): As mentioned in your provided text, sustained *zikr* ذکر and (*murāqabah*) مراقبہ (meditation) are seen as essential for achieving a continuous 'witnessing of divine grace.'

The specific methods and emphasis on these types of *zikr* can vary among different Ṣūfī orders, but the core principle of remembering Allāh and purifying the inner self remains universal.

Zikr of the human being (Physical Self): his anxiety.

Zikr of the heart: Its whispers (of doubt/temptation).

Zikr of the spirit (*rūḥ*): Its observations/witnessing (spiritual insights).

Zikr of the secret (*sirr*): Its struggles/sufferings.

Zikr of the hidden (*khafī*): Its hidden depths/mysteries.

Therefore, every act must reach a state of perfection so that one remains perfect at every stage. Keep the tongue engaged in the litanies of zikr and do not remain idle for even a moment.

Ḥazrat Sayyidunā Dāwūd Ṭā'ī داود تای (RA) told his servant to bring water. The servant brought the water. He took the cup of water in his hand but did not drink it. The servant asked, 'O Shaykh, you asked for water (why aren't you drinking it)?' He replied, 'The time it takes to drink water... (is a moment lost from *zikr*).'

It's better to spend that much time reciting verses from the Quran. Why should I waste so much time drinking water?

Therefore, conversation should also be limited to what is necessary, without any unnecessary additions.

A disciple of a Shaykh was writing. The Shaykh asked, 'Is there another pen?' The disciple replied, 'There is no extra pen.' The Shaykh said, 'Why did you add 'extra'? You could have just said, 'There isn't.'

The heart is the place of whispers (of doubt/temptation), meaning it is the place of remembrance.

One should remain so engrossed in remembering the Truth (Allāh) that nothing else enters the heart besides Him.

A servant was once with Ḥazrat Sayyidunā Bāyazīd Bisṭāmī (RA). One day, Ḥazrat Sayyidunā Bāyazīd Bisṭāmī (RA) asked him his name. The servant replied, 'O Shaykh! What misfortune is this that my name doesn't stay in your heart?' He (Ḥazrat Sayyidunā Bāyazīd Bisṭāmī (RA) said, 'O brother, the remembrance of Allāh is so deeply ingrained in my heart that no one else's name can reside in it. The soul, which is the place of witnessing, remains so engrossed in witnessing the Beloved that it doesn't separate for even a moment, but is always present.

Ḥazrat Sayyidunā Sulṭān Ibrāhīm Adham (RA) never sat cross-legged. Someone asked him the reason for this...

Would you like me to try to find the rest of the story about Ḥazrat Sayyidunā Sulṭān Ibrāhīm Adham (RA)?

‘He replied, ‘One does not sit on all fours in the presence of the Lord. Similarly, the place of the secret, which is the place of observation, revolves around the beloved’s mysteries and lights, such that nothing else is visible.’

An elder said to his maidservant, ‘O woman! Please call our maidservant.’ She replied, ‘Sir! I am your maidservant.’ The elder said, ‘By Allāh, I did not know you were my maidservant.’

The place of the hidden, which is the place of concealment, requires one to conceal oneself so that no effect becomes apparent on its own.

A person called out at the house of Ḥazrat Sayyidunā Bāyazīd Bisṭāmī (R.A.). He asked, ‘Whom are you looking for?’ The person replied, ‘Bāyazīd (R.A.).’ He said, ‘There is no one in this house except the Truth (*Ḥaq*).’

Another person came and also called out to Ḥazrat Sayyidunā Bāyazīd Bisṭāmī (R.A.). The Shaykh asked, ‘Whom do you seek?’ He replied, ‘I am looking for Bāyazīd Bisṭāmī.’

Ḥazrat Sayyidunā Bāyazīd Bisṭāmī (R.A.) said, "It has been thirty years that poor Bayazid has been searching, and there is no trace of him."

This statement has also been narrated by Ḥazrat Sayyidunā Zun al-Nūn Miṣrī (R.A.). He said, ‘Allāh Almighty has included my brother Bāyazīd (R.A.) among those who have become lost in the Truth.’

Ustāz Abu al-Qāsim (R.A.) wrote in Qushayrī that one should have a taste for remembrance (*zikr*).

The term ‘*zindīq*’ (زندیق) refers to an individual who is considered a heretic or apostate.

Here’s a breakdown of what that generally means:

Heresy/Apostasy: A *zindīq* is someone who, while perhaps outwardly appearing to adhere to a particular religion (historically, Islam), secretly harbours beliefs

that contradict its fundamental tenets, or openly rejects those tenets after having professed them.

Historical Context: The term '*zindīq*' gained prominence in early Islamic history, particularly during the Abbasid Caliphate, to describe individuals who were seen as dualists, Manichaeans, or those who denied core Islamic principles like the oneness of Allāh or the prophethood of Muḥammad.

Modern Usage: While the term is less common in everyday conversation today, it can still be used in academic or theological discussions to refer to heterodox or apostate views within a religious framework.

Essentially, a *zindīq* is someone whose beliefs deviate significantly from the accepted doctrines of a religion, often to the point of outright denial or opposition.

..not of the mentioned one, because remembrance (*zikr*) leads to reaching the mentioned one. The more you engage in remembrance, the more you will attain the mentioned one. Remembrance should get such a degree that one becomes lost in the mentioned one and forgets the desire for the mentioned one. The eagerness for the mentioned one is a sign of caprice and foolishness.

A heretic was instructed to recite the *kalimah* (declaration of faith): '*lā ilāha illallāh* (There is no God but Allāh).' The heretic said, 'It is easy to say '*lā ilāha illallāh*'; one should become lost in '*lā ilāha illallāh*.' He had a profound desire to become the one mentioned.

But you should…

Consider movement and residence.

What Allāh prefers and dislikes

The core message is to be grateful for what Allāh prefers (that which is pleasing to Him) and to abandon what He dislikes (that which is displeasing to Him). This highlights a fundamental principle in many spiritual traditions: aligning one's actions and intentions with divine will.

The Example of Ḥazrat Sayyidunā Ḥātim al-Aṣam (RA)

Ḥazrat Sayyidunā Ḥātim al-Aṣam (RA)' story illustrates extreme devotion to avoiding displeasing acts. When asked why he did something wrong, he bit his tongue and remained silent for several years. This emphasises the profound impact of one's words and actions and the lengths some devout individuals go to avoid offending Allāh. It also suggests a deep introspection and self-punishment for perceived transgressions.

Personal Effort and Divine Will

The text further advises that for actions pleasing to Allāh, one should leave their outcome to Him. This suggests trust and reliance on divine providence. Conversely, for actions displeasing to Allāh, one should make personal efforts to avoid them. This highlights the balance between faith and personal responsibility – while good outcomes are from Allāh, avoiding evil requires conscious human effort.

The Account of Ḥazrat Sayyidunā Zun al-Nūn Miṣrī (RA)

The mention of Ḥazrat Sayyidunā Zun al-Nūn Miṣrī (RA) encountering an elder leaning against a tree signifies a narrative or teaching moment. It sets the scene for a potential story or lesson from a revered spiritual figure, often illustrating wisdom or spiritual states.

constantly tells their self (*nafs*), 'O self, if you conform to obedience, that's good; otherwise, I will destroy you right here.' This illustrates an extreme form of self-control and spiritual struggle (*Jihād al-nafs*), where the individual is willing to go to great lengths to compel their inner self towards righteousness. It emphasises a zero-tolerance approach to disobedience.

Similarly, it applies this principle to actions and movements (*harakāt wa shakanāt*): if they are correct, one should be grateful; if not, one should actively seek to correct them. This extends the idea of constant vigilance and self-correction from internal intentions to outward behaviours.

The Story of Ḥazrat Sayyidunā Zun al-Nūn Miṣrī (RA) - Continued

The narrative about Ḥazrat Sayyidunā Zun al-Nūn Miṣrī (RA) continues. He reaches a place and sees a venerable elder (*buzurg*) inside a hermitage or cell (*ṣauma'ah*). The striking detail is that the elder's other foot is cut off and outside the hermitage, consumed by insects.

Upon witnessing this, Ḥazrat Sayyidunā Zun al-Nūn Miṣrī (RA) sought forgiveness (*istighfār*) regarding this condition. This implies a sense of awe, perhaps confusion, or even an internal plea for understanding or mercy in the face of such a severe spiritual or physical trial.

The text then states that the elder 'answered' him. This indicates a dialogue or explanation is about to follow, shedding light on the elder's extreme state.

The last fragmented sentence, 'One day, a woman with lustful desires...' suggests that the elder's condition or explanation might be connected to an incident involving temptation or a test of his resolve, likely related to worldly desires.

The Story of Ḥazrat Sayyidunā Zun al-Nūn Miṣrī (RA) - Conclusion

The elder's explanation for his severed foot, in response to Ḥazrat Sayyidunā Zun al-Nūn Miṣrī (RA)' seeking forgiveness:

'One day, to look at a woman with lustful desires, I stepped outside the hermitage. One foot was inside the hermitage, and one was outside. Allāh's **Ghinaab** (Wrath/Displeasure) descended at that very moment. So, I cut off the foot that was outside. Now I am anxious to see what happens to me.'

Explanation of the Elder's Act: This is a profound and extreme act of self-punishment and repentance. The elder's foot stepping outside the hermitage symbolised a moment of spiritual lapse, where his physical self (and thus his attention) was drawn towards worldly desire (the woman). The '**Ghinaab'** of Allāh refers to divine displeasure or a moment of severe spiritual consequence. To rectify this perceived transgression and to prevent any future temptation, he physically amputated the offending limb. His current state of 'anxiety' ('*ḥayrān hūn*') indicates a deep spiritual humility and fear of Allāh's judgment, despite

such a drastic act of penance. It emphasises being accountable for even a moment of spiritual heedlessness.

Accountability of Remembrance and Heedlessness

The text then shifts to a general principle of spiritual self-accounting:

‘One should ponder over the reckoning of remembrance (*yād*) and heedlessness (*ghaflat*): how much time passes in remembrance, and how much in heedlessness.’

Explanation: This is a core Ṣūfī practice of muraqabah (contemplation/vigilance) and *muḥāsabah* (self-accounting).

Yād (remembrance): Refers to the remembrance of Allāh (*zikr*), being conscious of His presence, His commands, and His attributes.

Ghaflat (heedlessness): Refers to forgetfulness of Allāh, being absorbed in worldly affairs to the point of neglecting spiritual duties and consciousness.

The passage stresses the importance of constantly evaluating one's time:

Gratitude for Remembrance: ‘One should express gratitude for remembrance.’ When one finds themselves in a state of remembrance, it is a divine favour and a moment of closeness to Allāh, deserving of thanks.

Regret and Repentance for Heedlessness: ‘And for heedlessness, one should feel regret and remorse.’ This implies seeking forgiveness and resolving to improve.

Considering oneself ‘dead’ in heedlessness: ‘In a state of heedlessness, one should consider oneself dead, because if one were truly alive, so much time would not pass in heedlessness.’ This is a powerful metaphor. Spiritual life is equated with remembrance of Allāh; spiritual death is equated with heedlessness. If a person were truly alive to their spiritual purpose, they would not allow themselves to be lost in distractions for extended periods.

The Story of a saint and the cessation of *zikr*

‘A venerable elder used to remain engrossed in the remembrance of Allāh (*zikr*). Suddenly, the *zikr* ceased.’

Explanation: This sets up another narrative. The cessation of *zikr* for a spiritual master is a significant event. It could imply:

A test from Allāh.

A deeper spiritual state beyond the need for verbal *zikr*.

A moment of spiritual challenge or a sign from the divine.

The final fragmented sentence, 'People...', indicates that the story continues, likely detailing the people's reaction or what happened next when they observed the saint's *zikr* stopping.

The saint and the cessation of *zikr* (conclusion)

The story continues from when the elder's *zikr* (remembrance of Allāh) suddenly ceased:

People thought he had passed away. Some of the *Ahlullāh* (people of Allāh / saints) arrived to inquire about his condition. They saw that he was safe. Regarding this incident, [the saint] sought forgiveness (*istighfār*).'

The elder replied, 'Yesterday, the *zikr* of Allāh suddenly eluded me. That's why the news of my demise spread, because if I were truly alive, *zikr* would not have eluded me.'

Explanation: This conclusion powerfully reinforces the idea that spiritual life is intrinsically linked to the remembrance of Allāh. For a saint, the cessation of *zikr* is akin to spiritual death. The perception of his 'demise' by others and his internal feeling of being 'not alive' without *zikr* highlight the profound depth of their connection to the divine. It's not about physical death but a spiritual state. If the soul is truly alive and connected, it cannot be heedless of Allāh.

Ḥazrat Sayyidunā Shaykh Farīd al-Dīn 'Aṭṭār (RA) on the importance of constant remembrance

Ḥazrat Sayyidunā Shaykh Farīd al-Dīn 'Aṭṭār (RA) states:

'If even one breath is empty of the thought of the Beloved, then what remains of your existence?'

Explanation: This is a concise yet immensely profound statement from a renowned Ṣūfī poet and mystic.

'The Beloved' (*maḥbūb*) refers to Allāh.

'Thought of the Beloved' (*Fikr-i maḥbūb*) implies constant contemplation, awareness, and remembrance of Allāh.

The rhetorical question 'What remains of your existence?' underscores that a life devoid of divine consciousness is essentially meaningless or incomplete from a spiritual perspective. It reinforces the idea that the true essence of human existence is found in connection with the Creator.

Accountability of presence and absence (of mind)

The text then introduces another level of spiritual self-accounting:

'One should ponder over the reckoning of presence (*ḥuzūr*) and absence/unawareness (*ghā'ib*): how much time passes in presence, and how much in absence. As for the time that passes in absence, one should understand it as a descent from *'illiyyīn* (highest heaven) to *asfala sāfilīn* (lowest of the low).'

Explanation:

Ḥuzūr (presence): Refers to a complete mental and spiritual presence with Allāh, being fully aware and attentive to Him. This is a higher state than mere *zikr*, a profound absorption in divine consciousness.

Ghā'ib (absence/unawareness): In this context, it means being absent from divine consciousness, lost in worldly thoughts, distractions, or forgetfulness. It is a state of spiritual disconnect.

The final analogy is compelling:

'Illiyīn (highest heaven): In Islamic cosmology, this refers to the highest realms of paradise, representing the peak of spiritual closeness and elevation.

Asfala sāfilīn (lowest of the low): This refers to the lowest possible depths, often associated with spiritual degradation or hell.

By stating that time spent in '*ghā'ib*' is a descent from *'illiyīn* to *asfala sāfilīn*, the text conveys the severe spiritual consequence of even a moment of

heedlessness or absence from divine presence. It suggests that every lapse in consciousness takes one far away from one's true spiritual potential and closer to a state of spiritual debasement.

The impact of ‘absence/unawareness’:

‘will reach. حضرت سید شاہ محمد اکبر الحسینی رحمت اللہ علیہ (Ḥazrat Sayyidunā Syed Shāh Muḥamamd Akbar al-Ḥusaynī, (RA)states, ‘If you become heedless for even a single moment, you move a hundred years away from the path of presence.’ This quote from a revered saint powerfully emphasises the extreme spiritual cost of even a brief lapse in divine consciousness. It highlights that progress on the spiritual path isn’t linear in terms of time, but rather immensely sensitive to the quality of one's inner state. A moment of heedlessness can undo years of spiritual effort.

Divine reckoning: ‘And Allāh takes an easy account’

The Arabic phrase فَسَوْفَ يُحَاسَبُ حِسَابًا يَّسِيْرًا translates to:

‘Allāh will soon be given an easy reckoning.’[17]

This is a quote from the Quran (often understood as referring to the Day of Judgment, but here applied to spiritual self-reckoning). While the previous statements highlight the severe consequences of spiritual lapses, this phrase offers a counterpoint of hope and divine mercy. It suggests that while human beings should strive for perfection and accountability, Allāh’s ultimate reckoning is not burdensome or overly harsh but just and merciful. It implies that Allāh’s judgment will be gentle if one genuinely strives.

The Hierarchy of Good Deeds and Spiritual Stations

The text then delves into a highly significant Ṣūfī concept, often attributed to the Prophet Muḥamamd (peace be upon him). However, it's more commonly found in Ṣūfī literature as a profound understanding of spiritual levels:

[17] The Quran, 84:8.

‘Deeds and states are commensurate with ranks and stations. The saying of حضرت رسالت پناہ افضل الصلاۃ و اکمل التحیات (Hadrat Risalat Panah Afdal-us-Salat wa Akmal-ut-Tahiyyat - referring to Prophet Muḥamamd, peace be upon him) is:

'حسنات الأبرار سيئات المقربين، وحسنات المقربين سيئات العارفين، وحسنات العارفين سيئات العاشقين، وحسنات العاشقين سيئات الواصلين، وحسنات الواصلين سيئات الموحدين'"

This profound statement describes a spiritual hierarchy where what is considered a ‘good deed’ (*ḥasanāt*) at a lower spiritual station can be viewed as a ‘sin’ or a shortcoming (*sayyi’āt*) at a higher station. It's not about moral transgression but spiritual refinement and elevating one's perception and connection to Allāh.

حسنات الأبرار سيئات المقربين

‘Ḥasanāt al-abrār sayyi’āt al-muqarrabīn’

‘The good deeds of the righteous (*abrār*) are the sins/shortcomings of those brought near to Allāh (*muqarrabīn*).’

The ‘*abrār*’ (righteous) perform acts of obedience (like prayer, fasting, charity) out of obligation. For them, these are great merits. But for the ‘*muqarrabīn*’ (those close to Allāh), performing these acts merely out of obligation, without deeper inner presence, profound love, or complete devotion, is considered a shortcoming. Their standard is much higher.

وحسنات المقربين سيئات العارفين

Wa Ḥasanāt al-muqarrabīn sayyi’āt al-‘ārifīn’

‘And the good deeds of the *muqarrabīn* are the sins/shortcomings of the Gnostics/Knowers of Allāh (*‘ārifīn*).’

The ‘*muqarrabīn*’ might perform their acts with devotion, but they might still be aware of their efforts or expect some reward. For the ‘*‘ārifīn*,’ who have deep spiritual knowledge and realise that all action is by Allāh’s grace, any lingering sense of personal effort or expectation is a flaw.

وحسنات العارفين سيئات العاشقين

‘Wa Ḥasanāt al-‘ārifīn sayyi’āt al-‘āshiqīn’

‘And the good deeds of the Arifeen are the sins/shortcomings of the Lovers (*‘āshiqīn*).’

The ‘ *‘ārifīn*’ possess deep knowledge and wisdom. But for the ‘ *‘āshiqīn*’ (lovers of Allāh), whose entire being is consumed by passionate love, anything less than total absorption in divine love, or any intellectual analysis that might subtly separate them from the direct experience of love, is a shortcoming.

وحسنات العاشقين سيئات الواصلين

‘Wa Ḥasanāt al-‘āshiqīn sayyi’īt al-wāṣilīn’

"And the good deeds of the *‘āshiqīn* are the sins/shortcomings of those who have attained Union (*wāṣilīn*).’

The ‘ *‘āshiqīn* ’ are consumed by love, but there might still be a sense of the lover and the Beloved as distinct entities. For the ‘*wāṣilīn*’ (those who have reached union), any lingering sense of duality, or anything that subtly separates them from the experience of complete Oneness, is a flaw.

وحسنات الواصلين سيئات الموحدين

Wa Ḥasanāt al-wāṣilīn sayyi’āt al-muwaḥḥidīn’

"And the good deeds of the *wāṣilīn* are the sins/shortcomings of the Unitarians/Those who affirm absolute Oneness (*muwaḥḥidīn*)."

The ‘*wāṣilīn*’ experience union, but perhaps there's still a faint trace of "self" that experiences this union. For the ‘*muwaḥḥidīn*’ who are annihilated in absolute Oneness (*tawḥīd*), any lingering sense of personal existence, even in the state of union, is a shortcoming. Their reality is only Allāh’s Oneness.

The essence of *tawḥīd* (Oneness) and the Role of a Perfect Guide

The text then rephrases this hierarchy in simpler terms and emphasises the ultimate goal and the means to achieve it:

‘Meaning, the good deeds of the righteous are obedience. And obedience without closeness is a sin in the eyes of the *muqarrabīn*. Closeness without knowledge is a sin in the eyes of the *‘āriḥīn*. Knowledge without love is a sin in the eyes of the *‘āshiqīn*. Love without union is a sin in the eyes of the *wāṣilīn*. Union without

Oneness (*tawḥīd*) is a sin in the eyes of the *muwaḥḥidīn*. So, lose yourself in the Only Being, for this is *tawḥīd*.'

Explanation: This beautifully summarises the journey towards *tawḥīd*, where each preceding spiritual stage, while meritorious in itself, becomes insufficient or even a barrier to the next, higher stage. The ultimate goal is complete annihilation (*fanā*) in the Oneness of Allāh.

Finally, the critical point about spiritual guidance:

'No *sālik* (seeker/traveller on the spiritual path) or *'āmil* (practitioner) can find the path of Tawḥīd without a Murshid-e-Kamil (Perfect Guide); rather, they will fall into *zandaqah* (heresy/agnosticism) and Ittihad (unlawful union/pantheism)."

This is a foundational tenet in Ṣūfīsm.

Murshid-i kāmil: A perfect or complete spiritual guide is deemed essential. They have traversed the path and can correctly direct the seeker, protecting them from pitfalls.

Zandaqah and *Ittiḥād*: These are dangerous spiritual deviations.

Zandaqah: Refers to heresy or atheism, where the seeker might lose faith or misinterpret divine truths.

Ittiḥād: Refers to a problematic form of pantheism or monism where the seeker mistakenly believes they are Allāh, or that there is no distinction between creature and Creator, leading to grave theological errors and often moral corruption.

The text emphasises that without proper guidance, the profound concepts of *tawḥīd* and spiritual union can be dangerously misinterpreted, leading to misguidance and spiritual ruin.

This final section of the text is vibrant, covering:

The severity of spiritual heedlessness, even for a moment.

The merciful nature of divine reckoning.

A profound Ṣūfī doctrine illustrating the dynamic and evolving nature of 'good' as one progresses through different spiritual stations, culminating in the absolute Oneness of Allāh (*tawḥīd*).

The absolute necessity of a perfect guide (*Murshid-i kāmil*) to navigate the complexities of the spiritual path.

And avoid dangerous theological deviations like heresy or unlawful union.

رفتا ہوکر مقصود سے محروم ہوجائے گا

‘He will be caught and deprived of his objective.’

طریق محمود وہی ہے جو اس رسالہ طریق المواحیدین ہیں مذکور ہے

‘The praiseworthy path is that which is mentioned in this treatise, ‘*Ṭarīq al-muwaḥḥidīn*.’

A great elder/saint says:

تو خدائی کے مقام کے مقام پر تو نہیں پنچھ سکتا لیکن اگر کوشش کرے ، تو اپنی ذات کی فنا ئیت کا مقام حاصل کر سکتا ہے

‘You cannot reach the station of divinity, but if you strive, you can attain the station of the annihilation of your self.’

These phrases seem to be from a spiritual or philosophical context, particularly the last one, which speaks to the concept of self-annihilation often found in Ṣūfī thought.

واللہ اعلم بارشاد منہ المبد و إلیہ المعاد

تمت البلخیر